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Department of State TELEGRAM

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 03326 01 OF 02 222037Z

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ACTION EA 19

INFO NSCE 00,CIAE 00,SSO 00,DODE 00,USIE 00,NSAE 00,CCO 00,SS 35,
GPM 03,SP 02,H 02,SAL 01,SAH 03,P 04,NSC 10,INR 07,IO 21,AID 30,
E 19,AGR 20,RSR 01,/177 W

P R 171100B AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4765
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3814
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 740
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2181

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: SAIGON 3239

SUBJECT: BIEN HOA CAMPAIGN APPEARANCE

1. JOINT PUBLIC APPEARANCE OF ELEVEN PRESIDENTIAL - VICE

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 3326/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
PRESIDENTIAL LISTS IN BIEN HOA MORNING OF AUGUST 6
WENT WELL. ABOUT 2500 VOTERS, MOSTLY CIVIL SERVANTS,
ON HAND AT BEGINNING OF THREE-HOUR PROGRAM; CROWD
GRADUALLY DIMINISHED AFTER HEARING FAVORITES AND
RAIN BEGAN TO FALL. APPEARANCES INTENSIVELY COVERED
BY INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC PRESS. DZU-CHIEU, SUU-DAN,

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 03326 01 OF 02 222037Z

KY-KINH AND HUONG-TRUYEN LISTS BEST RECEIVED BY CROWD. THIEU-KY SLATE WAS REPRESENTED BY A RELATIVELY UNKNOWN DOCTOR WHO WAS NOT WELL RECEIVED.
2. ADVANCE PUBLICITY BY BIEN HOA VIS RELATIVELY WEAK, BUT PERHAPS UNDERSTANDABLE IN VIEW OF ONE AND ONE-HALF DAY NOTICE WHICH PROVINCE AUTHORITIES RECEIVED OF IMPENDING VISIT. A FEW SOUND TRUCKS AND BANNERS WERE EVIDENT ON AUGUST 15, BUT AT LEAST HALF OF CROWD WHIPPED UP BY GIVING CIVIL SERVANTS LEAVE TO ATTEND, WITH VIS AND CHIEU HOI PERSONNEL PROMINEST. CROWD ALSO INCLUDED ABOUT TWO HUNDRED SOLDIERS, MOSTLY RF/PF FROM NEARBY POSTS, AND ABOUT THIRTY LOW-RANKING OFFICERS. LT. COL. TRAN VAN HAI, BIEN HOA PROVINCE CHIEF, WAS PRESENT, BUT STAYED IN BACKGRAOUND, AS DID MAJOR LY,

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 3326/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
POLICE CHIEF, WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR SECURITY OF MEETING. ABOUT TWO HUNDRED CAMPAIGN WORKERS OF VARIOUS LISTS ESTIMATED TO BE AT MEETING, WITH DZU, HUONG AND KHANH BEST REPRESENTED. KHANH ORGANIZATION IN ADDITION ROUNDED UP CLAQUE OF ABOUT ONE HUNDRED NOISY SUPPORTERS, WHO NOISILY INTERFERED WITH MEETING AT ONE POINT. A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF VILLAGE COUNCILMEN FROM REMOTE DISTRICTS IN EVIDENCE. PRESS REPRESENTATION TOTALED ABOUT ONE HUNDRED, EQUALLY DIVIDED BETWEEN DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN. "ORDINARY VOTERS" ONLY TWO HUNDRED AT MOST; SOME WERE PERHAPS DETERRED BY GAUNTLET OF POLICE THAT PUBLIC HAD TO RUN TO ATTEND MEETING.
3. MEETING WAS HELD IN COURTYARD OF GIRLS' ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. ABOUT ONE HUNDRED POLICE ESTABLISHED CORDON ONE BLOCK AWAY IN ALL DIRECTIONS. AMERICAN REPORTER TOLD EMBOFF THAT POLICE HAD DETAINED TWENTY PEOPLE ON SUSPICION THAT MORNING.
4. SPEECHES BEGAN ONE-HALF HOUR LATE, AT 0930. EACH LIST WAS ALLOWED FIFTEEN MINUTES AND, WITH EXCEPTION OF SUU-DAN LIST, WAS SHARPLY CUT OFF WHEN TIME RAN OUT. DR. DAN,

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 03326 01 OF 02 222037Z

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 3326/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L LIITED OFFICIAL USE
ACCORDING TO CORDS EMPLOYEE'S STOPWATCH, RECEIVED EXTRA
TWO MINUTES TO ANSWER PARTICULARLY VICIOUS QUESTION.
ONLY OTHER IRREGULARITY OCCURRED WHEN KHANH CLAQUE,
OUTSIDE GATE OF SCHOOL, CHEERED DEPARTING VU HONG KHANH
FOR SEVERAL MINUTES, INCIDENTALLY SABOTAGING SPEECH OF
HOANG CO BINH, WHO COMPLAINED THEN AND THERE TO MODERATOR
BIEN HOA CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN VU TRI PHUONG.
5. TRAN VAN LY WAS FIRST SPEAKER. LY REITERATED
PREVIOUSLY PUBLICIZED PROGRAM AND FAILED TO MOVE CROWD
IN SLIGHTEST.
6. SECOND SPEAKER, TRUONG DINH DZU, WAS HEARD ATTENTIVELY
AS HE USED MOST OF HIS TIME TO RESTATE HIS "PEACE
PROGRAM". DZU ADDED LITTLE THAT WAS NEW, BUT TOOK PAINS
TO EMPHASIZE THAT HE DID NOT PROPOSE TO DEAL WITH THE
NLF AS A LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, HE STATED, IT
MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT THE NLF DOES REPRESENT A SUBSTAN-
TIAL FRACTION OF THE NATION AND ANY GOVERNMENT THAT
REFUSES TO TALK WITH THE NLF CAN HARDLY EXPECT TO MAKE
PEACE. DZU WON GOOD HAND WHEN BELL ENDED HIS SPEECH.
7. SUU-DAN TICKET FOLLOWED. SUU MADE POINT THAT HE

PAGE 5 RUMJIR 3326/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
WOULD NOT WASTE CROWD'S TIME REHASHING PREVIOUSLY
ANNOUNCED POSITIONS, SPOKE FOR ONLY A FEW MINUTES. SUU
NOTED THAT IF ELECTED, HE WOULD CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE
REVOLUTIONARY PATH HE HAD CHOSEN LONG AGO. HE SAID
THAT THE FIRST TASK, TO MAKE VIET-NAM INDEPENDENT, HAD
BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, BUT REVOLUTION WOULD NOT BE COMPLETED
UNTIL THAT INDEPENDANCE HAD BEEN PERFECTED AND A STRONG
ECONOMY BUILT UP. DAN SPOKE FOR ABOUT TEN MINUTES, EMPHA-
SIZING REFORM OF MILITARY, ESTABLISHMENT OF MEANINGFUL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND MEANS OF ESTABLISHING
REAL PEACE. ON MILITARY QUESTION, DAN DREW LAUGHS
WHEN HE NOTED THAT SINCE 1963 MILITARY RULE HAD PRODUCED
ONLY ONE CRISIS AFTER ANOTHER AND MADE IT POSSIBLE
FOR OFFICER TO GO FROM MAJOR TO BRIGADIER GENERAL IN ONE
YEAR AND INTO EXILE THE NEXT. HE PROPOSED THOROUGH
REFORM OF PROMOTION POLICY TO INSURE THAT SOLDIERS

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PAGE 04 SAIGON 03326 01 OF 02 222037Z

OF ALL RANKS WOULD ADVANCE ONLY ON BASIS OF DEMONS RATED MERIT. DAN DEPLORED CURRENT CONFUSION OF VIETNAMESE ECONOMY, TO POINT THAT NATION FORCED TO IMPORT RICE.
BUNKER

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 03326 02 OF 02 222040Z

80
ACTION EA 19

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GPM 03,SP 02,H 02,SAL 01,SAH 03,P 04,NSC 10,INR 07,IO 21,AID 30,
E 19,AGR 20,RSR 01,/177 W

P R 171100Z AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4766
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3815
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG 741
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2182

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HE CRITICIZED REGIME'S SELF-OWNERSHIP PROGRAM, NOTING
THAT WHILE I BENEFITED A FEW HUNDRED SAIGON TAXI
DRIVERS, IT HAD DONE NOTHING FROM PEASANTS AND MASS
OF WORKERS. DAN SPECULATED THAT IF CURRENT TRENDS
CONTINUE, ONLY CAREERS WHICH WILL BE OPEN TO VIETNAMESE YOUTH WILL
BE WORKING IN BARS OR SHINING SHOES AND FOREIGN CARS, AND PROMISED
CAMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMET POLICY IF ELECTED.
ON QUESTION OF PEACE, DAN DECLARED THAT WAR COULD NOT BE
WON BY MEETING FORCE WITH FORCE, AND STRESSED THAT BULK
OF VIET CONG ARE "PEOPLE LIKE O AND ME, OUR FRIENDS

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 3326/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMITED OFFCIAL USE
AND RELATIVES WHO ARE DISGUSTED BY SOCIAL INJUSTICE."
ONLY BY CURING SICK SOCIETY, HE DECLARED, COULD VIET CONG
BE WON OVER.

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 03326 02 OF 02 222040Z

8. VICIOUS QUESTIONING BY HECKLER ALLEGING WEAKNESS AND OPPORTUNISM OF SUU AND DAN RESENTED BY AUDIENCE. AS NOTED ABOVE, TIMEKEEPER APPARENTLY GAVE DAN EXTRA TWO MINUTES TO DEFEND SUU AS "A TRUE REVOLUTIONARY." LIST GIVEN GOOD HAND.

9. NEXT SPEAKER, PHAM HUY CO, ALMOST GNORED AS CROWD DISCUSSED DZU AND SUU-DAN SPEECHED SMONG THEMSELVES. VU HONG KHANH FOLLOWED, AND WAS LISTENED TO. KHANH NOTED THAT, ALTHOUGH HE WAS SIXTY-EIGHT YEARS OLD, HE FELT THAT HE STILL COULD BE OF SME USE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE. HE ROUNDLY CRITICIZED KY'S PORTRAYAL OF HIS GOVERNMENT AS THE "GOVERNMENT OF THE POOR," AND ASKED RHETORICALLY IF IT HAD EVER DONE ANYTHING FOR THE PEOPLE. "NO," HE DECLARED, "IT HAD ONLY MANAGED TO SURVIVEFROM CRISIS TO CRISIS AND TALK A LOT." KHANH GIVEN FAIR HAND AS WELL AS HURRAHS FROM HIS CLAQUE.

10. BY TIME THE SIXTH SPEAKER, HOANG CO BINH, TOOK ROSTRUM, CROWD HAD DWINDLED TO ABOUT 1500. CROWD, DISTRACTED BY

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 3326/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
DEMONSTRATION FOR KHANH MENTIONED ABOVE, PAID LITTLE

ATTENTION TO BINH.

11. HA THUC KY WON APPROVAL BY COVERING ONLY KEY POINTS OF HIS PLATFORM AND STATING THAT THERE WAS NO NEED TO BORE THE CROWD BY TELLING TEM THINGS WHICH THEY ALREADY KNEW, THEN ASKED FOR QUESTIONS AFTER ABOUT FIVE MINUTES. KY WAS FIRST ASKED WHAT KIND OF CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT HE WOULD ESTABLISH, REPLIED THAT HE WOULD SELECT SKILLED LEADERS REGARDLESS OF PARTY OR FACTION. ANOTHER QUESTION REFERRED TO NGUYEN CAO KY'S STATEMENT THAT "HE WOULD OVERTHROW ANY GOVERNMENT THAT WAS COMPOSED OF SCONDRELS AND ASKED HA THUC KY WHICH SLATES THE PRIME MINISTER
WAS RFERRING TO. KY SAID THE QUESTIONER WOULD HAVE TO GET AN ANSWER FROM THE MILITARY. QUESTIONER, APPARENTLY A VIETNAMESE JOURNALIST, CONTINUED BY ASKING KY WHY THE CIVILIAN CANDIDATES WERE UNABLE TO UNITE BEHIND ONE LIST, AS THE MILITARY HAD, SO THAT THE PEOPLE

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Department of State TELEGRAM

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 03326 02 OF 02 222040Z

HAD A CLEAR CHOICE. KY ANSWERED THAT VIETNAMESE SITUATION WAS PECULIAR, ANYONE COULD RUN AND THAT IT WASN'T HIS FAULT

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 3326/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
THAT THERE WERE SO MANY CANDIDATES. HE RECEIVED FAIRLY GOOD HAND.
12. DR. VO VAN CUU, REPRESENTATIVE OF THIEU-KY TICKET, DID NOT PLEASE GENERALLY HOSTILE AUDIENCE, WHICH BY THAT TIME HAD DWINDLED TO ABOUT ONE THOUSAND. HEAD OF BIEN HOA UNITED BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION TOLD EMBOFF THAT CUU, A FRENCH-TRAINED DOCTOR, IS KNOWN IN BIEN HOA AS A REFORMED DRUNK. FOR TEN MINUTES, CUU READ WIDELY-DISTRIBUTED THIEU-KY CAMPAIGN STATEMENT, WHICH WAS NOT APPRECIATED BY CROWD. HE WAS THEN GRILLED, TO AUDIENCE'S OBVIOUS PLEASURE, ON WHICH LISTS PRIME MINISTER KY REGARDED AS "SCOUNDRELS." CUU EXPLAINED THAT KY HAD NOT EANT THAT FITHECTHE MILITARY OF KY HIMSELF WOULD OVERTHROW AN OBNOXIOUS GOVERNMENT, SHOULD ONE BE ELECTED, BUT THAT THE "WHOLE PEOPLE" WOULD CERTAINLY DO THAT. DONG HA INCIDENT ALSO BROUGHT UP; CUU DECLARED THAT HE COULD NOT REPLY TO THAT QUESTION AS HE WAS ONLY THIEU-KY SLATES LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOT WHOLLY FAMILIAR WITH INCIDENT. REPLY DREW MOCKING LAUGHTER AS TIME RAN OUT.
13. NONE OF AUDIENCE, BY NOW QUITE TIRED AFTER STANDING FOR TWO AND A HALF HOURS, LEFT AS HUONG AND TRUYEN ROSE TO SPEAK. HUONG SAID LITTLE ABOUT HIS PROGRAM AND MADE

PAGE 5 RUMJIR 3326/2 C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
NO PROMISES, BUT INSTEAD TALKED ABOUT THE "PITIFUL" SITUATION OF THE NATION, FOR WHICH HE DECLARED THE MILITARY WAS AT LEAST PARTLY RESPONSIBLE. VICTORY, HE SAID, WAS NOT ENOUGH; THERE MUST ALSO BE THOROUGH-GOING SOCIAL REFORM, AND A CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT WAS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS. MAI THO TRUYEN FOLLOWED, AND EXPLAINED TAT HE, A POLITICAL NOVICE, HAD DECIDED TO RUN IN THE HOPE THAT A "VIRTUOUS" GOVERNMENT COULD BE ESTABLISHED, RATHER THAN ONE OF "SELF-INTERESTED"

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PAGE 04 SAIGON 03326 02 OF 02 222040Z

PEOPLE. "WE WILL WORK ONLY FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE NATION",
TRUYEN CONTINUED, USING A VIETNMESE IDIOM: "AND IF WE
COULD NOT GOVERN LIKE THAT, WE WOULD RATHER STAY AS
CRICKETS IN THEIR HOLES" (I.E., REMAIN OBSCURE).
14. A LIGHT SHOWER BEGAN AS TRUYEN SOKE, BUT ATTENTIVE
CROWD ONLY MOVED UNDERNEATH PORCHES OF SCHOOL ON EITHER
SIDE O SCHOOLYARD. HUONG AND TRUYEN
OBVIOUSLY HAD COMPLETE RESPECT OF CROWD, AND WON WARMES
APPLAUSE OF ALL LISTS.
15. PERHAPS THREE HUNDRED LISTENERS REMAINED TO HEAR LAST
TWO SPEAKERS, NGUYEN DINH QUAT AND NGUYEN THE TRUYEN,

PAGE 6 RUMJIR 3326/2 O N F I D E N T I A L LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
RUNNING MATE OF NGUYEN HOA HIEP, AS GENUE CLOUDBURST
LOOMED. QUAT CANDIDACY WAS REGARDED AS A JOKE AND
SOME DISSATISFACTION WAS VOICED THAT HIEP FAILED TO APPEAR.
16. A NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE IN CROWD INDICTED THEIR
DISAPPROVAL OF SOME AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHERS WHO
CONTINUALLY CLIMBED ONTO THE SPEAKERS' PLATFORM,
SNAPPING CLOSE-UPS OF CANDIDATES AND PHOTOGENIC
TIMEKEEPER. BUNKER

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